

Mid Sussex Economic Development Strategy (Refreshed 2013)



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Economic Development Strategy

Focus of the Strategy

4. The Council agreed its Economic Development Strategy in 2010. The Council's refresh of this strategy and action plan has two key areas of focus as follows:

- Activities the Council can directly control, for example how it can improve the

- services it offers to local businesses; and,
- Activities it can influence, such as the work of our partner organisations, which will increase opportunities for the Mid Sussex economy.

Vision

5. The vision for the Mid Sussex economy is "A strong Mid Sussex economy, where business profits fully from economic growth and where our residents have the opportunity to work within their communities".

About "This is Mid Sussex" - the local economy in profile

6. The Strategy is based on a robust understanding of the Mid Sussex economy, its strengths and weaknesses, and its capacity for growth. Data on the economic performance of Mid Sussex can be found in 'This Is Mid Sussex'. This document includes information about the size and type of businesses in the District, the characteristics of employees (including their

skill levels and travel to work patterns) and the quality of the infrastructure to support economic activity. It concludes the following:

- Mid Sussex is a home for creativity - the local economy is diverse, with nearly a third of businesses in the Professional, Scientific and Technical and Information and Communication sectors.
- Mid Sussex is a resilient economy - the number of new businesses has increased since 2008, whilst unemployment has remained well below the national and regional averages.
- Mid Sussex is an established base for business - Mid Sussex residents are well educated providing a skilled workforce. The district also has excellent transport links to London and Brighton and a range of business premises.

The document can be found at www.midsussex.gov.uk/business



Strengths of the Local Economy

7. The Mid Sussex economy has seen increasing numbers of new businesses starting since 2008 and these businesses are able to survive over a longer period of time, with a fall in this trend only occurring recently (in line with the national trend). Unemployment continues to remain well below the national and regional averages and remains the lowest in West Sussex.

8. The Mid Sussex economy is diverse with a third of businesses in the Professional, Scientific, Technical and Information and Communications sectors. This is matched by a wide range of small and medium sized companies and with a number of larger companies spread over different sectors, and means we are not reliant on single large employers or a particular industry.

9. We have a well educated and skilled workforce which complements these strengths. The District has access to good transport links to London and Brighton compared to other parts of West Sussex and the South Coast. The district is also recognised as an attractive area to live which is often a factor in encouraging business start up and inward investment.



Introduction

1. The Mid Sussex economy has proved itself relatively resilient during the current downturn in the national economy. This is primarily due to the hard work and endeavours of local businesses. However, it is important that the Council plays its role, alongside many other organisations, in supporting local business where it can realistically do so.

2. This Economic Development Strategy pulls together the range of economic development activity carried out by the Council. It identifies some additional actions the Council could take, in order to achieve its aims for our local economy.

3. In doing so, it recognises that the Mid Sussex economy does not sit in isolation. It sits within a number of 'economies' at a local, national and international level. Many organisations including the Council carry out activities which influence and shape the local economy.



10. Looking ahead, "This is Mid Sussex" highlights some areas which have potential for further development and that will help build on the strength of the economy. For example, we need to ensure that local business requirements for new business space can be supported.

Strategic Objectives

11. The strategic objectives of this refresh are to:

1. Support a robust and resilient Mid Sussex economy through direct action and by influencing businesses and partners, with a particular focus on encouraging investment, enterprise and business start ups in Mid Sussex, particularly in creative and knowledge based sectors;
2. Seek to improve the self-sufficiency of Mid Sussex communities by creating 7,600 new jobs by 2031, enabling residents to work within the communities where they live to build stronger communities and reduce the need to commute;
3. Ensure that the Council has an outward looking attitude to support and encourage business growth through the provision of all its services and functions (the Whole Council Approach);

4. Engage with wider partnerships to deliver economic benefits for Mid Sussex.

Relationship with Other Strategies and Plans

District Council Strategies and Plans

12. The Council produces an annual Corporate Plan and Budget setting out what it intends to deliver and how it has allocated its resources. This is supported by individual service plans which for 2013/14 and beyond will require each business unit to set out how it will support local business actively. This has been done to encourage a 'Whole Council Approach' to economic development. The Council also has a series of strategy documents which need to take account of economic development, shown in Appendix 1.



Partners Organisations Strategies and Plans

13. There are a number of key strategies and plans developed by other organisations which impact on the economy of Mid Sussex. The key organisations are:

- The Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP);
- The Gatwick Diamond Initiative;
- The Rural Partnership;
- West Sussex County Council; and,

organisations have had to amend the focus of their strategies to address their concerns about the economy, and it is important that we take these changes into account. Contact with neighbouring authorities also takes place in relation to planning issues and other areas of mutual interest, including the Duty to



- Neighbouring Councils', especially Crawley, Horsham, Lewes and Brighton and Hove

14. Since the Council adopted its Economic Development Strategy in 2010, the Government has introduced Local Economic Partnerships (LEP). The Coast to Capital LEP covers this District and stretches from the Sussex Coast up to Croydon. It is establishing itself as a major influence on the economy of the area. The way in which government, organisations and businesses are funded and supported has also changed. Whilst the Mid Sussex economy is resilient, other partner

Co-operate. This includes regular meetings with Crawley Borough Council, Horsham District Council and Lewes District Council and meetings with Brighton and Hove City Council.

Influencing the outcomes for the benefit of the District's economy



15. The aims and objectives of the organisations that are set out below, are some of the main ones the Council can influence for the benefit of the District's economy (for example by lobbying for support to help stimulate our 'creative industries').

Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership

- o Focuses on enterprise and internationalism. Seeks to stimulate business growth, innovation, productivity and employment across a range of key sectors, bringing Gross Value Added and employment growth overall up to at least the regional average. Based on five partnership areas, including the Gatwick Diamond and the Rural Partnership.

Gatwick Diamond Initiative

Its vision is - 'by 2016 the Gatwick Diamond will be a world-class, internationally recognised business location achieving sustainable prosperity', supporting:

- o A flourishing and competitive knowledge based economy with high levels of entrepreneurship, providing sustainable employment and operating in an environment which enables the Diamond to be recognised, nationally and internationally, as one of the top locations for businesses
- o Strong, growing and aspirational communities with the skills to access the job opportunities available in the Diamond
- o The Gatwick Diamond Initiative is currently refreshing its focus for the next 10 years.

The Rural Partnership

- o The partnership covers the rural area of West Sussex, and overlaps with the Gatwick Diamond in Mid Sussex.
- o The partnership are currently formulating an Action Plan to focus on rural economic issues.

West Sussex County Council (Economic Development Strategy)

- o The strategy promotes West Sussex as first class business location



with the Council's agreed budget and progress against these will be reported on a twice yearly basis. It builds on the strengths of the local economy and those areas for further development which have been identified through "This is Mid Sussex".



- o The strategy identifies the need to adapt and respond to new funding conditions and opportunities to ensure that West Sussex secures investment to support its economic development priorities
- o The strategy supports the creation of a range of jobs that enable people to participate in the labour market in a way that best reflects their needs at different life stages
- o Support for local people to acquire skills that the economy needs is highlighted.

The Action Plan

16. The Action Plan reflects the 'Whole Council Approach' to economic development, recognising that this is a cross-cutting priority for the Council which involves a number of services. The Action Plan identifies the lead Cabinet Member for overall responsibility for ensuring that the outcomes in the Action Plan are met. Individual services will provide the resources to deliver each action in accordance



Economic Development Strategy Action Plan

- up to March 2015

Strategic Objectives

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3. Ensure that the Council has an outward looking attitude to support and encourage business growth through the provision of all its services and functions (the Whole Council Approach);
4. Engage with wider partnerships to deliver economic benefits for Mid Sussex.

Actions	Outcomes	Measures	Responsibilities and Dependencies
1. Support a robust and resilient Mid Sussex economy through direct action and by influencing businesses and partners, with a particular focus on encouraging investment, enterprise and business start ups in Mid Sussex, particularly in creative and knowledge based sectors.			
A) Permit and facilitate the development of additional and better quality business space in Mid Sussex through the exercise of landowner and planning powers.	To provide sufficient space of the right type and quality for new businesses to locate and existing businesses to invest in Mid Sussex.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased amount of approved commercial planning applications per annum. • Net increase in business floorspace provided in Mid Sussex. • Increase in Non Domestic Rates collected in Mid Sussex. 	<p>Lead: Cabinet Member for Planning and Regeneration</p> <p>Dependencies: Business Community engaging early in development of their proposals, and willingness of tenants/ other landowners to engage/ invest on Council owned business parks.</p>

Actions	Outcomes	Measures	Responsibilities and Dependencies
B) Deliver new starter business space at Bridge Road, Haywards Heath.	To meet the need for starter and 'growing on' space for small businesses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of new floorspace provided at the Bridge Road site by March 2015. • The proportion of space occupied by March 2016 (indicating that the project fulfils a local need). 	<p>Lead: Cabinet Member for Economic Development</p> <p>Dependencies: subject to planning permission being granted and to take-up of units.</p>
C) Support the revitalisation our town centres and initiatives to improve footfall to the Town Centres. To support Town Teams and Town Centre Partnerships in promoting their Town Centres.	Prosperous town centres that meet the needs of their communities and surrounding villages.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased floorspace permitted and delivered for improvements to the Town Centres (most likely to be delivered in this time frame are Burgess Hill town centre and Haywards Heath Station). • Increased footfall figures. • Comparison of car park figures. 	<p>Lead: Cabinet Member for Planning and Regeneration</p> <p>Dependencies: private investors, leaseholders and town centre managers. Also dependent on Town Teams / Town Centre Partnerships for promotion and events.</p>
D) Work with and provide funding for local Business Associations and other community based organisations / initiatives that promote the economy of Mid Sussex.	To encourage local communities to take the lead in promoting economic development in their own areas and in ways that best suit specific towns and villages.	Annual report of projects delivered through funding from the Economic and Business Related Activity grants. Annual report of outcomes from the business associations that receive funding.	<p>Lead: Cabinet Member for Economic Development</p> <p>Dependencies: Business Associations and other community groups.</p>
E) Collect and distribute funds for infrastructure, taking into account the needs of business, through s106/ Community Infrastructure Levy.	To improve the functionality of Mid Sussex as a business location, particularly through the provision of improved communications such as transport and broadband.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reporting of S106/ CIL receipts and spending (Annual Monitoring Report). • Reporting on delivery of infrastructure projects. 	<p>Lead: Cabinet Member for Planning and Regeneration</p> <p>Dependencies: Town and Parish Councils, West Sussex County Council, utility companies and health agencies.</p>

Actions	Outcomes	Measures	Responsibilities and Dependencies
F) Promote funding and other opportunities by advertising them through the website and other means in order to encourage local businesses to apply.	To encourage Mid Sussex businesses to make best use of funding opportunities to support their enterprises, and therefore the Mid Sussex economy.	Increased numbers of Mid Sussex businesses successfully gaining external funding, and increased amount of funding received.	Lead: Cabinet Member for Economic Development Dependencies: Those organisations promoting funding opportunities (Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership, West Sussex County Council etc). Businesses completing satisfactory applications and informing us of outcome.
G) Build on the success of 'Open4Business' as a flagship event to highlight the District Council's role in supporting the economy.	To highlight the support and advice available for businesses, and create an environment for companies to network and explore business opportunities with each other.	Feedback from the event, including increased satisfaction of attendees and evidence of business opportunities discovered. Increased attendance figures.	Lead: Cabinet Member for Economic Development
2. Seek to improve the self-sufficiency of Mid Sussex communities by creating 7,600 new jobs by 2031, enabling residents to work within the communities where they live to build stronger communities and reduce the need to commute.			
H) To facilitate new jobs through the delivery of District Plan economic policies including the allocation of the strategic employment site at Burgess Hill.	To improve the self-sufficiency of Mid Sussex communities by, enabling residents to work within the communities where they live to build stronger communities and reduce the need to commute.	Increase the number of jobs available in Mid Sussex by 380 per annum (District Plan target).	Lead: Cabinet Member for Planning and Regeneration Dependencies: adoption of the District Plan and investment by private sector.

3. Ensure that the Council has an outward looking attitude to support and encourage business growth through the provision of all its services and functions (the Whole Council Approach).

Actions	Outcomes	Measures	Responsibilities and Dependencies
I) Provide positive support and advice to new and existing businesses on Food and Health and safety, environmental and Licensing matters.	Improve the quality of food premises to attract more customers and increase economic vitality. Reduce costs to businesses as a result of meeting criteria.	Increased proportion of relevant businesses achieving 'Satisfactory', 'Good' or 'Very Good' for food hygiene ratings.	Lead: Cabinet Member for Health and Community Dependencies: Local businesses seeking advice and following it.
J) Maintain the Council's support for the provision of affordable housing in the area.	To assist Mid Sussex employees to live locally and to act as an incentive to inward investment by ensuring sufficient affordable homes for their workforce.	Numbers of affordable homes provided reported annually.	Lead: Cabinet Member for Health and Community Dependencies: developers and affordable housing providers.
K) Maintain high standards by paying invoices quickly.	To ease cashflow of businesses and avoid financial difficulties caused by unpaid debts.	Payment of undisputed invoices within 10 days of receipt.	Lead: Cabinet Member for Finance and Service Delivery
L) Procure services with local small and medium sized enterprises where practical to do so.	Support for local small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) by providing business opportunities where consistent with good value for money.	Increased number of local small and medium sized enterprises securing contracts with the Council.	Lead: Cabinet Member for Finance and Service Delivery Dependencies: companies bidding for contracts. Procurement procedures that do not disadvantage SMEs. May be difficult to measure.
M) Promote the attractiveness of the Mid Sussex historic, leisure and cultural facilities and events for residents and visitors.	To support local historic, leisure and cultural businesses and jobs by encouraging increased spend in Mid Sussex on these facilities and events. In the north of the District, East Grinstead and its surrounding areas make a significant contribution to this.	Annually report: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overnight trip spend. • Day visit spend. • Total business turnover. • Total jobs supported. 	Lead: Cabinet Member for Leisure and Sustainability Dependencies: leisure and cultural businesses and accommodation providers.

Actions	Outcomes	Measures	Responsibilities and Dependencies
N) Ensure that the Council's communications regularly focus on economic development themes, and that the business pages of the website are improved and kept up to date, including signposting to national organisations.	To send a clear message to the community and businesses that the economy of Mid Sussex is a priority for the Council.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of press releases and amount of coverage containing positive information about economic development impacts. Number of hits on the business pages of the Mid Sussex District Council website. 	<p>Lead: Cabinet Member for Finance and Service Delivery</p> <p>Dependencies: Local Press publishing releases on economic development activity.</p>
4. Engage with wider partnerships to deliver economic benefits for Mid Sussex.			
O) Work through the Gatwick Diamond Initiative to promote that brand, in support of Mid Sussex local businesses (especially the provision of a skilled workforce) and attract further investment into the area.	The role of the Gatwick Diamond as a nationally and internationally recognised business area provides a wider profile and exporting opportunities for existing businesses in Mid Sussex and attracts new ones to the area. The Gatwick Diamond Initiative is also working with local education providers to improve the match between skills and jobs and provide opportunities for work placements and apprenticeships.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased number of Mid Sussex companies engaged in export. Increased numbers of inward investment enquiries from Gatwick Diamond Initiative. Numbers of apprenticeships and type of skills. Skill level of Employees from 'This is Mid Sussex'. Reported delivery measured against the Gatwick Diamond Futures Plan (currently being refreshed). 	<p>Lead: Cabinet Member for Economic Development</p> <p>Dependencies: Gatwick Diamond Initiative and education providers and business interests. Also Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership and UK Trade and Industry (for inward investment enquiries).</p>
P) To engage in the work of the West Sussex Rural Partnership to promote the needs of Mid Sussex rural businesses.	The Rural Partnership focuses on increasing opportunities and removing barriers that prevent further growth of businesses in rural areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reported delivery against the Rural West Sussex Economic Development Strategy (currently being developed). 	<p>Lead: Cabinet Member for Economic Development</p> <p>Dependencies: other members of the Rural Partnership and rural businesses.</p>

Actions	Outcomes	Measures	Responsibilities and Dependencies
Q) Support and provide funding for the Mid Sussex Young Enterprise Board.	To encourage young people (14-16s) to see business as a future career, and to support them in gaining the skills to set up and run their own business.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved annual feedback from the participants to the Young Enterprise Board. Increased success of Mid Sussex schools in regional finals. 	<p>Lead: Cabinet Member for Economic Development</p> <p>Dependencies: participation by young people and support from volunteers for mentoring and judging the enterprises.</p>
R) Work with West Sussex County Council and other partners in partnership with others to provide support and incentives to those currently dependant on benefits to find work and/or increase their earning potential (linked to changes to Council Tax Support Scheme).	To enable more Mid Sussex residents to be economically active, to support the local economy and reduce commuting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase the proportion of Mid Sussex residents that are economically active and in work. Measure the number of people assisted into work or into better paid work by the scheme/s. 	<p>Lead: Cabinet Member for Economic Development</p> <p>Dependencies: WSCC and effectiveness of tapers, extended payments and other support in changing people's behaviour.</p>





Appendix 1 District Council Strategies and Plans

1. Mid Sussex District Council Corporate Plan

The Council's corporate priorities are:

- Better Lives,
- Better Environment and
- Better Services.

The individual service plans which are a part of the Corporate Plan reflect how these priorities will be delivered. Some of the priorities and activities have an economic impact, but this has not been highlighted in the past. The Action Plan below sets out activities and measures which give a clearer focus to the economic impacts of these service plans.

2. The Mid Sussex Sustainable Communities Strategy

The Sustainable Communities Strategy has four themes:

- Protecting and Enhancing the Environment;
- Ensuring Cohesive and Safe Communities;
- Promoting Economic Vitality; including
 - providing support for businesses,
 - providing housing for local workers,
 - improving town centres
 - promoting the education and training opportunities to improve the skills of the workforce.
- Supporting Healthy Lifestyles.

3. The Mid Sussex District Plan

The District Plan has a key role to play in delivering the vision and the priorities of the Sustainable Communities Strategy. The District Plan therefore recognises

- The important economic role this District has due to its location within the Gatwick Diamond. The policies within the Plan seek to deliver sustainable economic growth which will contribute to the overall prosperity of the Gatwick Diamond.
- The need to deliver the necessary infrastructure and new homes required to support economic growth. This is supported



by a set of Economic Development objectives which are:

- To promote a place which is attractive to all businesses, and where local enterprise thrives;
- To provide opportunities for people to live and work within their communities, reducing the need for commuting
- To create and maintain town and village centres that are vibrant, attractive and successful and that meet the needs of the community
- To support a strong and diverse rural economy in the villages and the countryside
- To support and enhance the attractiveness of Mid Sussex as a visitor destination
- The need to by 2031 to have an additional 7,600 additional jobs in Mid Sussex along with 10,600 new homes to enable Mid Sussex residents to live and work within their communities.

4. The Mid Sussex District Council Parking Strategy

Mid Sussex District Council manages and maintains 32 car parks and enforces parking controls on roads. The way in which parking is managed within the District can impact upon its economic prosperity. As well as providing a source of income to the Council, pricing and availability of parking has an important role to play in the economic viability of town and village centres. At the same time the management and provision of parking can influence peoples' travel choices and assist in the promotion of travel by sustainable modes.

